

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of microbially deactivating items and storing the same, comprising the steps of:

a) placing items within a cavity in a sealable container having fluid access ports therein, said fluid access ports having a normally closed position and being moveable to an open position;

b) placing said container having items to be microbially deactivated in said cavity into a reprocessor having a circulation system for circulating a microbial deactivation fluid during a deactivation cycle, ~~wherein~~ thereby causing said fluid access ports in said container ~~to move~~ are moved to said open position by contacting actuating means on said reprocessor to be in fluid communication with said circulation system[[s]];

c) circulating said microbial deactivation fluid through said cavity of said container; and

d) removing said container from said reprocessor following a deactivation cycle, ~~wherein removal of said container from said reprocessor causes~~ thereby causing said fluid access ports to assume said normally closed position.

2. (currently amended) A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

e) storing said container with said ~~deactivated~~ items therein for a period of time.

3. (original) A method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the step of:

f) placing said container in a heated chamber to dry off moisture in said container.

4. (currently amended) A method of microbially deactivating items and storing the same, comprising the steps of:

a) placing items to be deactivated into a cavity in a sealable container having a controllable fluid access port ~~therein to allow fluid access into said cavity~~, said fluid access port being moveable between a normally closed position and an open position;

b) placing said container having items to be deactivated therein into a reprocessor having a circulation system for circulating a microbial deactivation fluid through said cavity thereby causing said fluid access port to move to said open position from said normally closed position;

c) circulating said microbial deactivation fluid through said cavity;

d) removing said container following a deactivation cycle thereby causing said fluid access port to move to said normally closed position; and

e) storing said container with said deactivated items therein.

5. (original) A method as defined in claim 4, wherein said microbial deactivation fluid is a liquid solution.

6. (original) A method as defined in claim 5, further comprising the step of:

f) heating items within said container to evaporate moisture from said items.